613 The whole exogamous lineage now has over 300
644 members. This growth in numbers in the Brit-
423 ish period is part of the general increase in population all over Kerala; it is paralleled in many other royal and commoner lineages.

613 Within each property-group of the Zamorin's
644 lineage, residential and economic arrangements
593 differ somewhat from those of retainers. We may take as an example Kirakke tavari in Ernad division. This property-group contains 172 members and is the largest of the property-groups. It has a time-depth of eight generations. Most of the members live in a single
[344] kovilagam (palace) in Kottakkal village. The palace is a vast block of buildings with a fort at each corner and is surrounded by a moat. Within its precincts are, apart from the residential buildings, a temple, an elementary school and a high school for children of the lineage and the Nayar children of princes, and four bathing pools. The palace has a central kitchen where food is cooked for all members, and two main wings to house men and women [91] respectively. There is separate accommodation for the Nambudiri Brahman husbands of the women, who live uxorilocally at the expense of the palace. Each prince, and each princess with her small children, has a separate suite of two rooms. Children remain with their mothers in the women's quarters until the age of 15 when the boys move into separate rooms in the men's quarters and are prohibited from visiting the women. Brother-sister avoidance is strict. If a man wishes to speak to his mother or an

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Central Kerala Nayar

613 597 eage with which one was neither at enmity nor in regular asymmetrical political relationships. Thus the Travancore royal lineage several times adopted from Kolattiri, at the other end of Kerala, and the Calicut lineage from Nileswaram, the northernmost independent chiefdom of the Malabar Coast.

613 262 564 The giving and receiving of food, normally a hallmark of caste ranking, presented other problems. Some royal lineages were vegetarians and employed Nambudiri Brahman cooks who, being ritually higher than themselves, were permitted to serve them with food. Others seem to have drawn to themselves a small group of lineages as cooks and houseservants upon whom they conferred equivalence of caste rank, while maintaining them as their social inferiors and not intermarrying with them.

613 RESIDENCE AND KINSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

592 593 554 The property groups of village headmen's and chiefly lineages had residential arrangements similar to those of retainer Nayars, except that their houses were larger. The men of these groups visited their lower-ranking wives in the latters' homes. If they lived nearby, visits would occur at night; if at a distance, the husband might visit his wife about once a month and remain for two or three days. Similarly, women of these groups received visits from their higher-ranking husbands at convenient intervals. If he came from a distance the husband brought his own servants and cook, occupied a building near the taravād house, and stayed at his conjugal family's expense.

613 344 554 592 In the royal lineages each property group occupied a large palace. Within it each princess had her own suite of rooms in company with her children under the age of fifteen. Princes over this age had private rooms in a separate wing. The Nambudiri Brahman husbands of princesses (who were younger sons in their own households and had no managerial duties) lived at the palace for the duration of their marriages and were maintained at its expense. In the daytime they occupied a building within the royal courtyard, with its own bathing pool, kitchen, and servants, and visited their wives' rooms mainly at night. Junior princes visited their wives in nearby retainers' households or in more distant chiefly taravāds. Each royal sthāni had his own palace, estate, and retainers for the duration of his office. He would normally bequeath a house to a Nayar wife within the palace grounds and visit her and his children there.

595 554 [586] Although group marriage appears to have existed in theory among aristocrats, polyandry was in fact perhaps less common than among retainer Nayars. Princesses are said to have been sometimes poly-